UNDP

UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

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ENGLISH

APPROVAL OF UNDP ASSISTANCE TO A GLOBAL PROJECT
(GLO/91/013) - Ecologically Sustainable Cassava Plant Protection in South America and Africa: An Environmentally Sound Approach (IITA-CIAT)

Date of approval by the AC:[1]	29 January 1992
Expected duration:	Four years
Proposed executing agency:	UNDP
Proposed UNDP contribution:	$10 084 000
Source of funds:	Global IPF

Project background

Brazil is the world's largest cassava producer and 58 percent of this production (at 14.5 million tons) is concentrated in Northeastern Brazil. Most cassava in this region is grown by tenant farmers who cultivate plots of less than one hectare with infertile soul and limited rainfall. Africa accounts for 40 percent of the world's total cassava production; and one third (17 million tons) comes from West Africa. Cassava which is the most important source of carbohydrates for at least 75 million Africans is grown by small-scale farmers (mostly women) on plots of less than 0.5 hectare. Its production rarely exceeds eight tons per hectare.

Cassava demand in Africa and Northeast Brazil is increasing, and the resulting intensification of production (including using synthetic pesticides) will result in environmental degradation unless steps are taken immediately to increase production in an environmentally sound manner. Cassava pests, including arthropods, pathogens and weeds, can reduce cassava production by an estimated 50 percent.

IITA and CIAT have worked together over the last decade to develop sustainable and cassava protection technologies for Africa and South America. This Latin America-Africa bridge will provide access to natural enemies, resistant germplasm, and production expertise for national programmes interested in developing and implementing appropriate cassava protection technologies.

Description of project

This project will be carried out in Africa by the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture in collaboration with national programmes in Ghana, Benin, Nigeria and Cameroon, and in South America by the Centro Internacional de Agricultura Tropical in Collaboration with the Brazilian Agricultural Research Enterprise (EMBRAPA) in Northeast Brazil.

[1] This Fact Sheet reflects the status of the project/revision at the time it was approved by the Action Committee; modifications to the project/revision may have occurred subsequently.

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The project will develop, test and implement sustainable cassava protection technology for the most important cassava insect pests found in Northeast Brazil and in the African countries. It will feature collaboration with national plant protection staff, extension workers and farmers from Brazil, Ghana, Benin, Nigeria and Cameroon. In order to increase the probability of technology adoption, extension workers and farmers will be trained in the principles and practices of sustainable cassava protection. In a special effort to enhance the contribution of African women in agriculture, IITA will select African women from each participating country for M.Sc. (or equivalent) training.

In support of the above-mentioned objectives, methods will be developed for decentralized mass rearing and field release of biological control agents. Other research will be concerned with strain selection of cassava green mite, fungal pathogens, root rot etiology, impact of biological control agents on non-target organisms, screening technology components for undesirable environmental effects, and development of strategic and tactical models. Support activities for the project will include mass production of natural enemies for use in farm trials by national programmes, multiplication of planting material, shipments of natural enemies from South America to Africa via quarantine in the Netherlands, and shipments of natural enemies from CIAT to Brazil via quarantine at EMBRAPA/Centro Nacional de Pesquisa para Defesa da Agricultura (CNPDA), Jaguariuna, Sao Paolo, Brazil.

Inputs

UNDP will provide assistance in sustaining the protection of the cassava plant in South America and Africa through training, co-ordination, research and extension in the collaborating countries.

Financial data

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Personnel	2 472 000
Research	5 761 000
Training	1 551 000
Direct Cost*	300 000
Total	10 084 000

* The UNDP direct costs will be used in monitoring the progress of the collaborative effort and an end of project evaluation . In addition, it is anticipated that other countries, donors and institutions may wish to associate themselves with the project, or initiate parallel efforts, and informal consultations and workshops are anticipated.

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